

Message Text

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JANUARY 2, 1974.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK (N.I.)

SUBJECT: N.I. EXECUTIVE TAKES OFFICE AND STARTS WORK

SUMMARY: NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATION WAS SWORN IN DECEMBER 31 AMID EXPRESSIONS OF GOODWILL FROM OFFICIAL BRITAIN AND IRISH SOURCES AND PLEDGES OF PARTY LEADERS TO DO THEIR BEST FOR PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND. DEVOLUTION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POWERS TOOK EFFECT JANUARY 1, AFTER REORGANIZATION OF MINISTRIES AND TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS TO DEPARTMENTS REQUIRED BY NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT. IT IS THOUGHT THAT IN EARLY DAYS EXECUTIVE WILL CONCENTRATE ON LEARNING THEIR JOBS AND FINALIZING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAM FOR PRESENTATION TO ASSEMBLY IN LATE JANUARY. END SUMMARY.

1. NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE JANUARY 1, WITH POWERS DEVOLVED FROM WESTMINSTER OVER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

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2. AT BUSINESSLIKE CEREMONY AT STORMONT CASTLE DECEMBER 31,

MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATION HAD BEEN SWORN IN BY NORTHERN IRELAND CHIEF JUSTICE, AND RECEIVED WARRANTS OF OFFICE FROM NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY FRANCIS PYM (WHO RETAINS AUTHORITY FOR LAW AND ORDER MATTERS, AS WELL AS CONSIDERABLE SUPERVISION OVER EXECUTIVE IN PERFORMANCE OF ITS DUTIES). PYM THEN DECLARED DIRECT RULE AT AN END, EMPHASIZED THE REMAINING "AWESOME TASK" OF ENDING VIOLENCE AND TERROR AND CALLED ON PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND TO "RISE TO THE GREATNESS OF THIS OPPORTUNITY AND TO GIVE THEIR FULL-HEARTED SUPPORT TO THE NEW EXECUTIVE."

3. UNIONIST LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE BRIAN FAULKNER WAS FIRST OF THREE EXECUTIVE COALITION PARTY LEADERS TO REPLY TO PYM. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ALTHOUGH NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT ENVISAGED PRESENT COALITION, IT COULD NOT HAVE COMMANDED IT: "WE STAND HERE OF OUR OWN FREE WILL, IN A PARTNERSHIP WHICH SEEKS TO FACE THE REALITIES OF LIFE IN NORTHERN IRELAND TODAY." THIS COALITION AND ITS SUPPORTERS "ALREADY REPRESENTS A MAJOR DEFEAT FOR THOSE WHO HATE THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. THAT IS WHY THE CLAMOUR AGAINST US COMES FROM SUCH STRANGE ALLIES." EXECUTIVE WOULD GET DOWN TO WORK "AT ONCE" AND WOULD BE "MOST ACTIVE ADMINISTRATION THAT NORTHERN IRELAND HAS KNOWN IN MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY." DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT THROUGH EXECUTIVE WAS NOT ONLY RIGHT, BUT THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE, SINCE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN REJECT TOTAL INTEGRATION, CONTINUED DIRECT RULE LIMITS FREEDOM TO MANAGE OWN AFFAIRS AND "THE DELUSION OF AN INDEPENDENCE..... WOULD LEAVE US CRIPPLED AND IMPOVERISHED." IN NORTHERN IRELAND PEOPLE GIVE ADMINISTRATION A CHANCE TO WORK," I BELIEVE WE CAN DEPLOY MORE POWER TO DO GOOD IN NORTHERN IRELAND THAN ANY OF OUR PREDECESSORS."

4. SDLP LEADER AND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE GERRARD FITT EXPHASIZED THAT THE OATH HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAD JUST TAKEN TO ACT IN BEST INTERESTS OF PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND WAS ONE THAT THEY COULD TAKE IN GOOD CONSCIENCE. SOME PEOPLE WOULD SEEK TO BRING EXECUTIVE DOWN, BUT OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WANT IT TO SUCCEED, AND HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY MEN OF VIOLENCE.

5. ALLIANCE PARTY LEADER AND HEAD OF OFFICE OF LAW REFORM OLIVER NAPIER SAID COALITION ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT CURE ILLS OF

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NORTHERN IRELAND OVERNIGHT, BUT PROVINCE HAS NEW AND EXECITING FUTURE. "WE CAN SHOW THE WORLD THE NEW SPIRIT OF ULSTERMEN. THAT SPIRIT IS UNDERSTANDING THE OTHER MAN'S POINT OF VIEW" WHETHER YOU AGREE WITH IT OR NOT. THAT SPIRIT IS OF FORGIVENESS OF PARTY INJURY, REAL OR IMAGINED. THAT SPIRIT IS OF GENEROSITY AND REALISM. PUTTING THE FUTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND ITS PEOPLE BEFORE PARTY, BEFORE POLITICAL DOGMAS, BEFORE POLITICS, BEFORE MYTHS. IN A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY WE CAN SURELY

DEMONSTRATE CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES."

6. ON BEHALF OF EXECUTIVE, FAULKNER RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM IRISH TAOISEACH, LIAM COSGRAVE, CONGRATULATION EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF TAKING OFFICE PROMISING COOPERATION. COSGRAVE REPEATED PREVIOUS IRISH GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES OF HELP IN DEFENDING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS OF NORTH AGAINST VIOLENCE: "THOSE WHO SEEK TO UNDERMINE OR WRECK THOSE INSTITUTIONS BY VIOLENCE WILL FIND NO REFUGE HERE. THESE ARE NOT MERE WORDS." TAOISEACH REASSERTED DETERMINATION THAT STATUS OF NORTHERN IRELAND WOULD NOT BE ALTERED WITHOUT CONSENT OF ITS PEOPLE.

7. AFTER CEREMONY AND PRIVATE LUNCHEON GIVEN BY SECRETARY PYM, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS IMMEDIATELY RETIRED FOR FIRST MEETING IN ASSEMBLY BUILDING. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS TOOK OATH TO OBSERVE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT. AFTER MEETING, EXECUTIVE ISSUED STATEMENT URGING THAT 1974 BE "YEAR OF RECONCILIATION." EXECUTIVE WOULD "BE GUIDED BY RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS: THE RIGHT TO WORK, THE RIGHT TO A DECENT HOME, THE RIGHT ABOVE ALL TO LIVE IN PEACE AND FREEDOM." ORGANIZATIONS PURSUING POLITICAL ENDS BY VIOLENT MEANS SHOULD "STOP THE KILLING. THERE IS NO MANDATE FOR SUCH ACTS, NO CONSTRUCTIVE ENDS TO BE ACHIEVED BY THEM." SOME ARE SINCERELY OPPOSED TO COURSE EXECUTIVE IS TAKING: EXECUTIVE COULD NOT PREVENT THEM FROM EXCLUDING THEMSELVES FROM PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY, BUT WOULD DEPLORE SUCH EXCLUSION, AND IS PREPARED TO SIT DOWN FOR CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER INTERESTS, AND TO LISTEN CAREFULLY TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THOSE THEY REPRESENT, ASKING ONLY THAT OPPOSITION ALSO RECOGNIZE NEED FOR RECONCILIATION. "WE DO NOT EXPECT EVERYONE TO SUPPORT US: BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND WANT TO SEE US MANAGING OUR OWN AFFAIRS ONCE AGAIN, AND WILL BE PREPARED TO JUDGE US BY WHAT WE DO."

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8. UK PRIME MINISTER HEATH WROTE TO FAULKNER, EXPRESSING BEST WISHES FOR FUTURE TO HIM AND OTHER EXECUTIVE MEMBERS. HE PRAISED EXECUTIVE COALITION PARTIES FOR HAVING RISEN ABOVE HISTORIC PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND BRINGING HOPE FOR BETTER FUTURE. POLITICAL STABILITY COULD UNDERMINE SUPPORT FOR MEN OF VIOLENCE AND MAKE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS POSSIBLE.

9. BEFORE EXECUTIVE TOOK OFFICE, NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE ANNOUNCED ORDER BY SECRETARY PYM REORGANIZING NORTHERN IRELAND MINISTRIES (WHICH BECAME "DEPARTMENTS" ON DEVOLUTION DAY) IN LINE WITH AGREEMENT AMONG PARTIES ON EXECUTIVE-DESIGNATE. ORDER TRANSFERS MANPOWER FUNCTIONS OF MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES TO NEW DEPARTMENT OF MANPOWER SERVICES, TRANSFERS MATTERS RELATING

TO ROADS. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, TRANSPORT, CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, WATER, SEWERAGE AND PUBLIC SANITATION FROM MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT TO NEW DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT: DISSOLVES MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND DISTRIBUTES VARIOUS FUNCTIONS (OTHER THAN LAW AND ORDER MATTERS RESERVED TO NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE) TO FOUR DEPARTMENTS: TRANSFERS SPORT AND RECREATION FUNCTIONS FROM MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS: AND DESIGNATES FORMER DEPARTMENT OF PRIME MINISTER AS OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE. THUS, THERE IS NO ADMINISTRATIVE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS HEADED BY MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE AND THOSE HEADED BY ADMINISTRATION MEMBERS NOT IN EXECUTIVE. THERE IS NO MENTION OF NAPIER'S OFFICE OF LAW REFORM: IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS MUST BE BUILT UP FROM SCRATCH. AND WOULD HAVE TO OBTAIN DEVOLUTION OF SOME PRESENTLY-RESERVED LAW-AND-ORDER FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO BECOME ENTITY."

10. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT INITIAL PREOCCUPATION OF EXECUTIVE AND MINISTRATION WILL BE GETTING TO KNOW THEIR DEPARTMENTS, AND FINALIZING AGREED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAM FOR PRESENTATION TO ASSEMBLY WHICH IS DUE TO RESUME SITTING JANUARY 22.

1. AS OF THIS DATE, ACCORDING TO STORMONT SOURCE, EXACT TITLE OF NEW HEADS OF DEPARTMENT HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED. "MINISTER" SEEMS TO BE PREFERENCE OF MEN THEMSELVES, AS WELL AS OF MEDIA. BUT FORMER "MINISTRIES" HAVE BEEN ABOLISHED, AND THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION THAT FAULMX WILL NOT BE CALLED "PRIME MINISTER."
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